DEPUTATION TO THE RT. HON. L. S. AMERY, M.P., SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES ON BEHALF OF THE COLLEGE ∴ ∴

IMPERIAL BUREAU
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Via colendi haud facilis.

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(1) A SERVICE OF THE WHOLE EMPIRE.

Leader reprinted from "The Times," Wednesday, July 8th, 1925.

MR. AMERY gave an encouraging answer to the deputation which waited on him yesterday to plead the cause of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad. It is true that he was unable to commit himself and the Government to a definite reply, but his obviously sympathetic attitude made it clear that the College will have a friend at court when the time comes to consider its claims. There are, indeed, many and excellent reasons why the COLONIAL SECRETARY should look with favour upon such an institution. It is an Imperial College in more than name. Its thirty-four students already include men from distant corners of the Empire, and its graduates will one day go out from St. Augustine to spread the light, not only among the surrounding sugar plantations of the West Indies, but far afield in the cotton fields of East Africa, the cocoa plantations of Nigeria, and the copra barns of the South Seas. So many of the rich Dependencies of the Empire lie in tropical, or semi-tropical, zones that their development is a matter of common concern. The discovery of a new seed to increase production or a new means to eradicate a pest does not merely affect the prosperity of one industry alone. It may well perform a great service to the Empire, whether that service lies in the provision of more employment in Lancashire, or in the spread of civilization among some remote Bantu people, who almost reluctantly leave their tribal wars and their witch doctors for the cultivation of the little plot around their huts. All these reasons, and more, make it a matter of pressing importance that the Government should take its share in setting the College upon a firm and prosperous foundation. The appeal to the public on behalf of the College

was one of the last of the services rendered by LORD MILNER to the Empire, and it is to be hoped that a further response may now be organized in honour of his memory. So huge an undertaking, however, cannot be left dependent altogether upon the generosity of private individuals and business corporations, and it is to be hoped that not only the Government of this country, but also the Governments of those Dominions and Colonies which are likely to benefit so much from the practical research of the College, will realize that in this institution on the island of Trinidad they have a special charge of their own.

The immediate needs of the College are a hostel for the accommodation of students and a research farm where theory may be carried into practice. Every one who has had experience of life in the tropics will bear witness to the direct effect which comfortable quarters and healthy surroundings have upon the efficiency of a young man's work. This is especially true of men who are living in the tropics for the first time in their lives, and if students are to be trained in Trinidad before setting out to take up their appointments in other and even more distant corners of the Empire it is absolutely essential that their introduction to a tropical climate and to tropical conditions of life should be made in the right surroundings. It is also clearly desirable that the College should be established on a residential basis if those in authority are to have any control over the students, and if the latter themselves are to be given the opportunity of developing a corporate spirit. As for the establishment of a research farm, such a step would appear to be almost a matter of course, for without fields and plantations in which to make actual tests the experiments of the laboratories must remain largely hypothetical. There are other requirements of which the College stands in need to-day; the library and the laboratory must be properly equipped, roads and fences must be built, and, if growth is not to be cramped, more land must be bought adjoining the boundaries. All this will take money, and, so far, only a quarter of the sum of £100,000 that is necessary to place the College on a safe foundation has been subscribed. If the other £75,000 is to be raised there must be a further and generous response from the public to the appeal of those who have undertaken the formidable task. For this reason alone an early lead from the Government (and MR. AMERY'S sympathetic answer at least inspires the hope of one) is a matter of urgent necessity in the interests of the College and of the whole Empire.

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(2) INTRODUCTION OF THE DEPUTATION BY LORD BURNHAM.

LORD BURNHAM, in introducing the Deputation, said: Colonel Amery, I succeeded our lamented leader, Lord Milner, as Chairman of the Appeal Committee of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, and I have the honour to introduce to you this afternoon a Deputation as authoritative and as representative as has ever been received by a Secretary of State for the Colonies. The members of it combine, as I think you will see if you glance at the list of names, those who can speak on this subject with the fullest knowledge. Sir Arthur Shipley is going to state our case for us. All I wish to do is to read out to you two short letters. The first is from Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who writes to me: "I am very much interested in the work of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, and would go with you to the Colonial Office on the 7th July. The hour, however, is an impossible one for me. I hope you will be successful in your approaches." The second one is from the President of the Manchester Cotton Association, who regrets that he is unable to attend owing to a prior engagement. At the same time he wishes the Deputation every success and in the interests of the Empire he feels it is essentially a matter for the Government to give most liberal support.

I will now, if you will allow me, ask you to hear Sir Arthur Shipley.

(3) ADDRESS BY SIR ARTHUR SHIPLEY.

SIR ARTHUR SHIPLEY then rose and said :—

With your permission, I will begin by giving a brief account of the origin and history of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, whose claims we are here to press. The College was founded in 1921 as the outcome of the recommendations of a Committee appointed by one of your predecessors, that great statesman and patriot, Lord Milner, whose death we all so deeply deplore.

For many years the need had been apparent for an institution of University standing in the British tropics where young men desirous of becoming planters could obtain a thorough training in the science and practice of tropical agriculture, where successful candidates for positions in Colonial Agricultural Departments could obtain practical experience in the tropics before proceeding to take up their appointments, and where research in the field of tropical agriculture on which so many industries and, indeed, every man, woman and child in this country are so vitally dependent, could be conducted on an extensive scale.

It was to meet this need that the College was established, and we can, I submit, claim that it has proved already a great success. The question of a site for the College was the subject of close and most careful investigation, and it is now generally agreed that no more suitable position for it could have been found than Trinidad, an Island which has a wide variety of soils and cultivation and enjoys the great advantage of being outside the hurricane zone—a matter of great importance where continuous research is concerned.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago helped us materially by giving us an ideal site of 85 acres on a 199 years' lease at a peppercorn rent of 1s. a year, while the planters allowed themselves to be taxed to provide a generous gift of £50,000 towards the erection of buildings.

The Imperial Government also consented to give us £15,000 spread over five years on the condition that the work of the Imperial Department of Agriculture, which was amalgamated with the College, was maintained. This grant, I regret to say, expires next year, which is one of the reasons why we are here to-day !

At present the Imperial College and its laboratories and class-rooms are housed in a temporary building. We hope, however, that our new buildings, the foundation-stone of which was laid eighteen months ago, will be ready for occupation in October next. They are dignified though simple, and we owe much to the architect, Major H. C. Corlette for having designed a well-proportioned building suitable in every respect for scientific research in a tropical climate. We have also on the site a comfortable and well-arranged home for our Principal, Dr. Martin Leake, and already three houses for our Professors. Then, during last year, we have been able, thanks to the generosity of the British Sugar Machinery Manufacturers (who gave us plant and machinery to the value of at least £20,000) and with the help of Mr. C. T. Berthon, who gave us the benefit of his engineering knowledge without fee, to erect an experimental and instructional sugar factory capable of turning out sugar commercially, though on the smallest scale—for the last thing the Governing Body wish to do is to compete with the local planters. The object of this factory is to enable us to turn out sugar technologists for whom we have hitherto been compelled to look to the United States and Holland. We have now on our staff six highly qualified Professors and six lecturers, including one endowed by the International Health Board, whose duties it will be to impart to our students a knowledge of tropical sanitation and hygiene which will be useful not only to themselves but also to the people among whom they will reside in every part of the Empire within the tropics.

We have received, and are receiving also, much valuable support from the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation and the British Cotton Growing Association. The Corporation has for the past two years been sending students to the College to be trained as cotton experts and now, I am pleased to say, it proposes to establish its Cotton Research Station in the immediate neighbourhood of the College.

To-day I am also able to tell you that I have just signed a cheque for £1,000 sent me for the Special Appeal Fund by the Liverpool Cotton Association, Ltd., as a grant towards the training and housing of cotton students at the College.

Then I must not omit to mention that we enjoy the support and co-operation of the Department of Agriculture of Trinidad and Tobago.

Another asset is that our Governing Body consists of many of the leading authorities on tropical agriculture in all its aspects tempered by an infusion of men of science who most loyally and whole-heartedly give their gratuitous services in organising the development of the College, because they believe it to be essentially a great constructive and patriotic work of vital importance to the Empire. I submit that the development of so great an institution in so short a time is a very remarkable achievement ; and although I believe it is unusual to recite poetry in an address to a Secretary of State, I venture to quote a few lines from the unknown author of Ecclesiasticus, who has put what we have done in far better words than I can command :—

> And I came out as a stream from a river,
> and as a conduit into a garden.
> I said, I will water my garden,
> and will water abundantly my garden bed ;
> And, lo, my stream became a river,
> and my river became a sea.

I now pass on to the needs of The Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture which are *most* pressing and urgent. In the able report recently issued on East Africa recording the results of the

Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore's mission, great stress is laid on the urgent necessity of improving our knowledge of the resources of the great tracts of Africa they visited :—

> "In our opinion there are few subjects of greater importance to the development of the East African territories than scientific research. It is clear to us that far greater effort must be made, both by the Imperial Government and by the local Governments, to organise more effective services in this respect."

To make these "greater efforts" in East Africa and other tropical Colonies, scientifically-trained men must be found, and it is to the training of such men that the energies of the staff of the College are directed.

As you, Sir, are aware, the Committee over which Lord Milner, and latterly, Lord Lovat, presided, have formulated certain proposals for the training of officers for the Agricultural Services of the Colonies. It is hoped that such officers will in future spend one year at the Imperial College in order to enable them to gain practical experience of agricultural problems under tropical conditions. Provision for the accommodation of these students, who will number about twenty annually, must be made. Consequently the foremost of our immediate requirements is the building of a hostel where students can reside. Lodging-house accommodation is inadequate and anyone who has been in the tropics will, I am sure, appreciate the importance of placing these young students in healthy and happy surroundings, with just that tinge of discipline which undergraduates at home, if they do not welcome, never resent. But apart from these considerations, all who value the corporate spirit which is developed by college life in cooler climates will agree that such a hostel is absolutely essential. It is estimated that we could build one for some forty students for the sum of £25,000.

A second urgent need is an estate for the research work and the practical study of farming in all its branches. The hostel would, of course, be a source, though possibly a slight source, of revenue. The farm ought in time to pay its way. The cost of such an estate and a sum for working expenses is put at £25,000. It is further desirable to round off the College property by the purchase of some ten acres of land. The needs of the Library and the equipment of the laboratory for the teacher of tropical sanitation and hygiene will exhaust another £7,000, while for electric light plant, &c., we require £7,500. Roads must be laid out and fencing put up, and it is very important that we should have some endowment fund. In response to the appeal of Lord Milner and Lord Burnham for £100,000 to place the College on a sound financial basis, some £25,000 has been subscribed. But we still want at least another £75,000 and somehow or other we must endeavour to raise this sum.

We have, I claim, justified our existence. Applications from would-be students are coming in from the whole Empire. Our success almost frightens me! But having once begun we are bound to go forward. Nobody appreciates the importance of developing the tropics more than you do, Sir. The world is rapidly being filled up, but there are yet large areas in the tropics which are still available. Geologists tell us that oil is gradually being exhausted. Apparently the difficulty of mining coal economically is steadily increasing. The tides have never been harnessed, and the energy derived from the wind is almost negligible, whilst that of waterfalls is largely localised. There are people who are bold enough to prophesy that the new form of energy available must be alcohol, and it is on the energy of sunlight which is so abundant in the tropics and sub-tropics, that we must rely in the future to build up those carbo-hydrates from which alcohol is so readily made.

What I want to emphasise is that if we are to redeem our pledge to provide accommodation for students in accordance with the recommendations of Lord Milner's Committee, and to train them to fill positions in the Agricultural Departments of the Colonies throughout the Empire, and if we are effectively to carry on the great work upon which we are now engaged, it is absolutely essential that we should be adequately provided with funds. Our hostel must be erected and ready to accommodate students next year, and our research and educational work will be seriously delayed if we are not soon placed in a position to acquire an estate.

Consequently, we desire to urge most strongly that His Majesty's Government may see its way to continue on an increased scale its annual contribution towards the maintenance of the Imperial College and further, that it will provide us with such financial assistance as will enable us to take immediate steps towards securing the erection of a Hostel, acquiring a Farm and carrying out the other objects which we have in view. Finally, I would express the hope, Sir, that you will also bring before the attention of the Colonies throughout the Empire the aspirations and needs of the Imperial College which has been established with a view to securing their agricultural development.

I can confidently claim, Sir, that the College, which is not yet on the shady side of three years' old, has more than justified the most ambitious hopes of those who took part in its initiation, and I feel, Sir, that we deserve every possible support from the Government to help us to continue what I honestly believe to be a work of the utmost Imperial importance. In the words of Emerson, when Lord Milner initiated the movement, "he builded better than he knew."

(4) REPLY BY THE RT. HON. L. S. AMERY, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

At the conclusion of Sir Arthur Shipley's Address,

THE SECRETARY OF STATE rose and said :—

I gather, Lord Burnham, that no other members of the Deputation wish to speak. It is said that "Speech is silver and silence is golden." Certainly in the case of a gathering of men of such eminence in so many fields of scientific, commercial and public activity, the mere presence of the members of this Deputation, especially at a busy time of the year like this, is in itself very significant of the importance which educated public opinion is beginning to attach to The Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture. It is a fact which I shall certainly not fail to lay stress upon in the negotiations which I shall have to undertake with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of that cause, in which I can assure you, Sir Arthur, I am as keenly interested as any member of this Deputation. I think that the circle of those who are beginning to realise the importance of scientific tropical agriculture is steadily widening. I do not think anyone could have followed the Debates in the House of Commons recently, more particularly the Debate which took place yesterday, without realising that in an ever-increasing degree responsible public men of all parties are beginning to grasp the fact that in the development of the tropical regions of the world, and more especially the tropical regions of our own Empire, lies the greatest hope of a complementary and non-competitive trade which may help towards the recovery, and, indeed, to something far more than the recovery, of this Old Country. It is not a new conception altogether. After all, it was something like 70 years ago that List first put forward the doctrine that the economic marriage of the tropical and temperate zones constituted the greatest future field for the world's economic development; and what he advocated then is in an ever-increasing measure necessary for this country—and for temperate Dominions, too, because their development as great industrial communities will also depend enormously upon the development of the tropical Empire. This work that you are undertaking, which, I hope, will spread to all tropical Africa and to all our tropical Possessions, is of just as great interest to the ultimate future of Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and Australia as it is of direct and immediate interest to this country. Now, with this immense importance of tropical development, nobody can afford to underrate the part that science can play in it. We cannot afford to underrate its part anywhere; but in the tropics, where Nature is so extraordinarily rich, both in her power of creation of the things useful to man and in her power of propagating the enemies of those things, it is only where science comes in and checks the enemies to that plant and animal production which is of use to us that you can get the fullest results. But where you do get them, you get a far richer return than you can secure, even with the help of science, in the slower growing regions of the temperate and northern world.

On this matter we are not speaking merely from the theoretical point of view. After all, what we are doing to-day is only following on the line of those who have first blazed a path for us. It is now nearly thirty years ago that Mr. Chamberlain first started the Imperial Department of Agriculture, and I doubt if there was anything that did more during those years to save the West Indies from economic ruin than the work of that Department. And, of course, in no small measure that Department both gave an example and also, through its late chief, the first Principal of the new College, a direct chain of continuity in expansion. The same was equally true of the great work that Lord Milner did in South Africa after the Boer War. Of all the great work of reconstruction to which he devoted himself, no part has been more fruitful and more untouched by political controversy than the work he did in establishing agricultural colleges, experimental and research stations all over South Africa. Modern South Africa as a thriving agricultural country is in no small measure the direct creation of Lord Milner's work during those years, and the essence of the conception which inspired him throughout was his faith that science was bound to pay in the long run, and that research and education are always worth the cost. It was in that spirit that he naturally warmly took up the movement for the establishment of this College in its early stages. I well remember the first infant rill of that stream to which Sir Arthur Shipley refers, a little dinner of some half-a-dozen of us, some of whom I see in this room to-day, at which we first discussed the possibility of such a project. It was discussed, I think, at more than one dinner, until eventually it took a shape which could be brought before the Secretary of State, who at once warmly endorsed it, established a Committee to work it out, saw it satisfactorily started, and since then, in the last few months of his life, threw not only the weight of his name, but his keenness and enthusiasm into the appeal which you, Lord Burnham, have been making to the public, and which you are also to-day making to the Government—I hope in any case not to the exclusion of a continued appeal to the public, for, however much or little it may be possible for the Government to give, I am sure you will want a great deal more from the interested public. Since then, as you have pointed out, both the commercial world, the planting world, the Cotton Growing Corporation, the sugar manufacturers, and the Colonial Office have come in an ever-increasing degree to realise the importance that the College may be to them. As the result of a Committee originally presided over by Lord Milner, and since then by Lord Lovat, we have decided that a year's course with a scholarship at the Imperial College is an almost essential preliminary to the future training for agricultural services throughout the tropical Colonies.

I may say that the whole case which you have stated to-day, Sir Arthur, has already been put before the new Committee of Civil Research in its

general outlines, and I hope now to take the matter up more definitely and directly with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to see what, under present financial conditions, is possible and to what measure of assistance he can be persuaded. I think you would not expect me to say more than that as to the actual help that may be given. At any rate, I can assure you, gentlemen, that I have the greatest faith in the future of this Imperial University of Tropical Agriculture, for such I believe it will become. I have the greatest faith in it, and I certainly feel that it is one of those things to which a very small amount, relatively speaking, of all our vast expenditure, devoted to-day ought to bring in enormous results in the future.

I should like very much to thank you, gentlemen, for having come, because really, if I may say so, you have not come to ask a favour from me, but, in the interest you are showing and the help you are giving to this movement, you are conferring a great favour upon the Colonies and Protectorates and all that tropical Empire for which this Office is responsible.

(5) THE SECRETARY OF STATE THANKED BY LORD BURNHAM.

LORD BURNHAM: Colonel Amery, we are very grateful for the favourable way in which you have received and addressed us. May I say that we took your sympathy for granted, and we are certain that our cause could be in no better hands than yours.

In regard to the future, I may say that the Appeal Committee will continue its work, and hopes to receive substantial sums by way of public and private subscriptions. It is not for me to suggest to you how best we may fortify your case with your colleague, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I am certain, however, that so far as we can bring you evidence of the universal support of the Colonies throughout the Empire for this scheme, we shall try to do so, and I imagine that you are yourself taking means to ascertain the views of the Governments in regard to it. May I hope, however, that, whatever the decision is, we shall know soon so that the Governing Body may make its plans accordingly. You know better than I do what the exigencies of the Government are, but, as I have pointed out recently, in order to gain anything from the Exchequer now, you have to mobilise public opinion by every means you can. On the other hand, the Chancellor seems responsive when he feels that a public necessity has arisen on broad grounds of Imperial interest. I only wish to say that all our machinery, such as it is, is at your service, and Mr. Aspinall, of course, will be able to give you all information as to what the Appeal Committee is doing and what further subscriptions it receives in aid of our funds. I have only to thank you once more for your courtesy and kindness.

(6) MEMBERS OF THE DEPUTATION.

Among those who accepted invitations to attend were :—

Earl Buxton, President of the African Society; Lord Lovat; Lord Stanley of Alderley, Chairman of the Royal Colonial Institute; Lord Lamington, President of the East India Association; the Master of Elibank, member of the governing body of the Imperial College; the Lord Mayor of London; Prof. J. R. Ainsworth-Davis, late Principal Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester; Sir Henry McMahon, Chairman of the Fellowship of the British Empire Exhibition; Sir Arthur Shipley, chairman of the governing body of the Imperial College; Sir William Grey-Wilson, late governor of the Bahamas; Sir James Currie, director of the Empire Cotton-Growing Corporation and member of the governing body of the Imperial College; Lieut.-Colonel Sir David Prain, vice-chairman of the governing body of the Imperial College; Sir Edward Davson, Chairman of the British Imperial Council of Commerce and member of the governing body of the Imperial College; Sir John Russell, Director of the Lawes Agricultural Trust, Rothamsted Experimental Station; Sir Robert Rutherford, member of the governing body of the Imperial College; Mr. J. Evelyn Wrench, secretary of the Overseas League; Mr. F. W. Hayne, vice-chairman of the Overseas League; Dr. Alex Hill, secretary of the Universities Bureau of the British Empire; Dr. L. Haden Guest, M.C.; Mr. J. Sandeman Allen, M.P., Chairman of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce; Mr. P. J. Hannon, M.P.; Mr. Albert E. Jacob, M.P.; Mr. J. A. Tinne, M.P.; Mr. G. Moody Stuart, Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Imperial College; Dr. Arthur W. Hill, member of the governing body of the Imperial College and Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; Mr. W. Scott Herriot, member of the governing body of the Imperial College and Chairman of the British Empire Sugar Machinery Manufacturers' Association; Mr. W. H. Himbury, member of the governing body of the Imperial College and general manager of the British Cotton-Growing Association; Mr. E. A. de Pass, member of the governing body of the Imperial College; Mr. C. F. Wood, Chairman of the Colonial Bank; Mr. Stanley Machin, vice-president of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce; Mr. E. Porrit, ex-president of the Liverpool Cotton Association; Mr. Benjamin Morgan, Chairman of the British Empire Producers' Organisation; Mr. J. H. Batty, Chairman of the African and Eastern Trade Corporation, Ltd.; Mr. T. C. Owen, President of the Ceylon Association; Mr. W. A. Bulkeley Evans, secretary of the Public Schools Employment Bureau, Headmasters' Conference; Mr. W. H. Fyfe, M.A., Headmaster of Christ's Hospital; Mr. S. Cameron, British Guiana merchant; Mr. H. T. Pooley, secretary of the British Empire Producers' Organisation; Mr. H. Hamel Smith, editor of *Tropical Life*; Mr. T. Dowdall Hampson, organising secretary of Lord Burnham's Special Appeal; and Mr. Algernon Aspinall, secretary of the Imperial College.